

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation  
September 20, 2007

**PIER 52 BOAT LAUNCH AND PUBLIC ACCESS**

File No. 07-062-01

Project Manager: Joan Cardellino

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Authorization to disburse up to \$200,000 to the Port of San Francisco for construction of a new boat launch ramp in San Francisco Bay near Pier 52.

**LOCATION:** City and County of San Francisco. (See Exhibit 1.)

**PROGRAM CATEGORY:** San Francisco Bay Program

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**EXHIBITS**

Exhibit 1: [Project Location and Site Map](#)

Exhibit 2: [CEQA Documents](#)

Exhibit 3: [Letters of Support](#)

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**RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:**

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 31160-31165 of the Public Resources Code:

“The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of up to two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) to the Port of San Francisco for the purpose of constructing a public boat launch ramp near Pier 52 in San Francisco, subject to the following conditions:

1. No Conservancy funds shall be disbursed until the Executive Officer of the Conservancy has reviewed and approved in writing:
  - a. Any contractors to be used.
  - b. A final work plan, including a final budget and schedule.
  - c. A signing plan acknowledging the Conservancy’s funding of this project.
2. The Port shall maintain the improvements for no less than 20 years.”

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

“Based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibits, the State Coastal Conservancy hereby finds that:

1. The proposed project is consistent with Chapter 4.5 (Sections 31160-31165) of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code regarding resources and recreational goals in the San Francisco Bay Area.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines adopted by the Conservancy on January 25, 2001.
3. The Conservancy has independently reviewed and considered the following documents adopted by the City and County of San Francisco under the California Environmental Quality Act on the dates indicated (collectively attached to the accompanying staff recommendation as Exhibit 2): Negative Declaration (September 12, 1995); Addendum to Negative Declaration (July 15, 1996); and Addendum to Negative Declaration (February 17, 1998). The Conservancy finds that there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment, as defined in 14 California Code of Regulations Section 15382.

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### **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

Staff recommends authorization of up to two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) to the Port of San Francisco for the purpose of constructing a new public boat launch ramp near Pier 52. The Port has developed a design for the launch ramp that has two lanes instead of one, and has a floating dock component that is specifically designed for kayakers and is accessible to physically handicapped boaters.

The existing boat launch at Pier 52 in Mission Bay is the only public boat launch in the City and County of San Francisco. Built in the early 1960s, it is seriously deteriorated, not suitable for launching modern boats, and has a dangerously steep slope. The Port has worked diligently with the boating community to develop a design for a new launch facility that will meet the needs of a range of recreational boaters, including both motorized and non-motorized craft. The new facility will serve the growing demand for recreational boating access to the Bay, and will serve the Coast Guard, police and Navy as well. The site is identified in the draft San Francisco Bay Water Trail as an initial or “backbone” site.

The project involves constructing a new 2-lane boat launch ramp and will require demolition of existing structures, removal and placement of fill, and shoreline stabilization. A low dock will be built at the end of the floating dock to accommodate kayakers and physically challenged individuals who cannot use the higher, standard dock. The Port built a new parking lot in 2005 as an initial component of the project.

The Port of San Francisco has jurisdiction over most of the bay waterfront in San Francisco. It will maintain the boat launch, and add additional public facilities, such as a small café or equipment rental kiosk, as funding allows.

**Site Description:** Pier 52 is located on the bay waterfront, on the east side of Terry Francois Boulevard, at the foot of North Mission Bay Boulevard, about one-half mile south of AT&T Stadium. (See site map, exhibit 1.) Along this stretch of central waterfront are maritime-based activities, including small boat repair and storage. There are also piers in this area that are dilapidated and under-utilized. To the west of the site is the new Mission Bay community, a large mixed-use housing and commercial development.

**Project History:** The Port of San Francisco has been working to design and develop a new boat launch ramp in Mission Bay for 10 years. As currently designed, the project is modern, efficient, and should handle the increased use anticipated for the area. Partly due to tremendous development efforts in the area, including the AT&T Stadium, rerouting of China Basin Street/Terry Francois Boulevard, and the Mission Bay development, the boat launch project has been delayed. Now that those other projects have been completed or are underway, the Port was able to go out to bid on the launch facility last spring, but it received bids higher than the available funding. As the project has already been value engineered to the maximum extent, in May Port staff contacted Conservancy staff to request funding assistance.

**PROJECT FINANCING:**

<b>Coastal Conservancy</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>
Port of San Francisco	600,000
Department of Boating and Waterways	<u>1,800,000</u>
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>\$2,600,000</b>

Conservancy funds are expected to come from a fiscal year 2005-06 appropriation from the “Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air, and Coastal Protection Bond Fund” (Proposition 12), which can be used for public access projects in the San Francisco Bay Conservancy Program jurisdiction.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S ENABLING LEGISLATION:**

This project is consistent with Chapter 4.5 of Division 21 of the Public Resources Code regarding resources and recreational goals in the San Francisco Bay area. The project is consistent with Section 31162(a) and (d) in that it will help improve public access within the bay and will provide a valuable recreational amenity to a large urban population. Consistent with Section 31163(c)(1) (supported by local or regional plans), the boat launch ramp is included in the City and County of San Francisco Central Waterfront Planning Area of the San Francisco Master Plan; (2) (serves a regional need) it will serve regional visitors traveling along the San Francisco Bay Trail, or using the new San Francisco Bay Water Trail; (3) (timely implementation) will be constructed by the end of February 2008; (4) (avoid lost opportunities) by providing the funding now, the Conservancy preserves the opportunity to construct the launch ramp, which would be lost due to lack of sufficient funding to complete the project by the deadline; and (5) (includes matching funds) matching funds will be provided in the ratio of 13:1.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S  
STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):**

This project is consistent with **Goal 11, Objective 11A** of the Conservancy’s 2003 Strategic Plan in that it will implement a recreational boating facility.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY'S  
PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES:**

The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy's Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines adopted January 24, 2001, in the following respects:

**Required Criteria**

1. **Promotion of the Conservancy's statutory programs and purposes:** See the "Consistency with Conservancy's Enabling Legislation" section above.
2. **Consistency with purposes of the funding source:** See the "Project Financing" section above.
3. **Support of the public:** This project is broadly supported by both motorized and non-motorized boaters. See letters of support in Exhibit 3.
4. **Location:** This project is located on San Francisco Bay.
5. **Need:** The Pier 52 boat launch will expand capacity at the only public launch facility in San Francisco. With the increased interest in boating and kayaking, and the growing residential development in the vicinity of the project site, there is significant need for a modern launch facility to accommodate this recreational activity, as well as the public safety uses that it will serve. As the Department of Boating and Waterways (the main state funding agency for boating facilities) has provided most of the funding, and the Port of San Francisco has contributed as much as it can, this project cannot be completed without Conservancy funding.
6. **Greater-than-local interest:** With the development of a San Francisco Bay Water Trail public launch sites such as proposed here will be needed to serve the anticipated regional demand.

**Additional Criteria**

7. **Urgency:** The Port is in jeopardy of losing \$1.8 million in funding if the launch ramp is not constructed by the end of 2007. By providing funding at this time, the Conservancy will enable the project to be completed.
8. **Leverage:** See the "Project Financing" section above.
9. **Innovation:** The boat launch design incorporates a specialized dock specifically suited to physically disabled boaters and to kayakers, both of which need a very low dock in order to get on and off small water craft.
10. **Readiness:** The Port is ready to commence construction this autumn.

### **CONSISTENCY WITH SAN FRANCISCO BAY PLAN:**

The proposed boat launch facility is consistent with recreational policies in the San Francisco Bay Plan adopted by the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission in January 2006. Recreation policy number 1 states that “water-oriented recreation facilities such as marinas, launch ramps, beaches, and fishing piers should be provided” to meet the needs of a growing population. Policy number 4(d) states that launching lanes should be placed where wind and water conditions would be most favorable for smaller boats. The Pier 52 location is sheltered and designed for small non-motorized boats as well as motorized boats. Additionally, Bay Plan recreational policy 4(d) calls for additional launching facilities to be located around the Bay shoreline, especially where there are few existing facilities. These facilities should be available free or at moderate cost. Launching facilities should include adequate car and trailer parking, restrooms, and public access. The Pier 52 boat launch ramp will be free, and has a new parking lot to accommodate boat trailers, and public access along the shoreline. No restrooms will be provided, however.

### **COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA:**

The City and County of San Francisco, acting as lead agency for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act with respect to the proposed boat launch facility, adopted a Negative Declaration on September 12, 1995, finding that there was no substantial evidence that the project could have a significant effect on the environment. The project scope at that time included redesign and reconstruction of the existing boat launch ramp; construction of a small building for food service sales and fishing supplies; a new deck; a gangplank to serve a floating dock; and a parking lot to accommodate vehicles with trailers.

Subsequently, the project was modified to include new off-street parking, a larger boat ramp, a smaller bait/coffee shop, and reconfigured public access area. In July 1996, the City’s Office of Environmental Review reevaluated the Negative Declaration in light of these proposed modifications, and determined that they would not result in a substantial change in the environmental effects of the project. The City adopted a CEQA Addendum to the Negative Declaration on July 15, 1996.

The project was revised again in 1997, so that the existing boat launch would remain instead of being removed, and a new 2-lane launch would be built next to it. Leaving in place the existing ramp meant in turn that some of the modifications to the public access area and shoreline protection would not be needed. The parking lot would be located 500 feet south of the proposed plan, but would be the same size as originally proposed (20 oversized spaces). New trip generation to the site as a result of the proposed revisions would not change, and there would be no additional bay fill.

The City of San Francisco adopted a second Addendum to the Negative Declaration on February 17, 1998, which chronicled the modifications to the plan. The City concluded that no further environmental review was necessary, given the minor nature of the changes and the lack of evidence of significant environment effects as a result of these changes.

The Port Commission of the City and County of San Francisco adopted a resolution on August 14, 2007, stating that the Commission had reviewed the Final Negative Declaration, dated August 11, 1995 and found that there have been no substantial changes in the project, and no new information of substantial importance that was not known and accounted for in the Final

Negative Declaration regarding significant environmental effects or mitigation measures. The resolution is included in Exhibit 2.

The Conservancy will contribute funds to the project through the Port of San Francisco, and therefore serves as a responsible agency under CEQA. Conservancy staff has reviewed the City's Negative Declaration and Addendums for this project. Staff concurs with the City and County of San Francisco that this project, as proposed, does not have the potential to result in any adverse effects on the environment.